

Mary J. Coggeshall Memorial Marker



Mary J. Coggeshall Historical Marker

The Iowa Capitol Planning Commission, on recommendation from the Site Features Committee, approved the Mary J. Coggeshall Votes for Women Marker. The marker was placed in the flowerbed south of the Pioneer Statuary Group and Buffalo Fountain, which is located west of the Iowa State Capitol, on September 17, 2020. The dedication took place on September 26, 2020.

Mary Jane Coggeshall was at the center of the suffrage movement in Iowa for 41 years. She was called "The Mother of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Iowa." Mary Jane and her husband, John, both birthright Quakers, traveled by covered wagon to Des Moines in 1865. Mrs. Coggeshall was a charter member of the Polk County Woman Suffrage Society in 1870 and a member of the Iowa Woman Suffrage Association, which she served as president for multiple terms between 1890 and 1905 and honorary president from 1905 through 1911. In 1895, she was elected to the board of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), the first-ever NAWSA board member from west of the Mississippi River and one of the few Iowans to participate on a national level early in the movement. She marched in the Boone, Iowa, suffrage parade in 1908, gave speeches at the NAWSA conventions in 1904 and 1907, and was the first editor of Iowa's primary suffrage newspaper, *The Woman's Standard*. Mrs. Coggeshall served as a dedicated, faithful, and generous link between those who began the movement in 1848 and those who completed it in 1920.